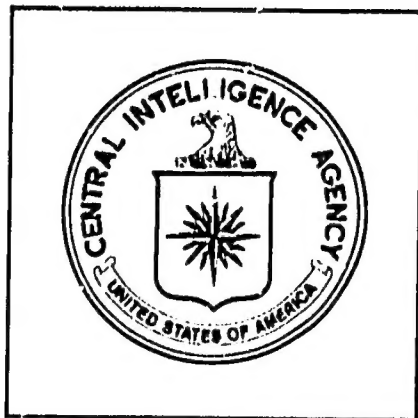


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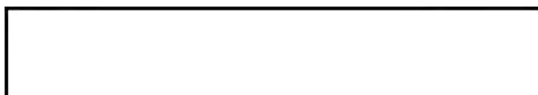
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Arafat Prolongs Stay in Moscow

PLO chief Arafat, who was originally slated to leave for Czechoslovakia today, will now stay in the USSR until Sunday. His extensive discussions with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko have apparently left substantial areas of disagreement between Moscow and the Palestinians.

[REDACTED]

One line of speculation is that recognition of Israel's existence is at the heart of the discussions. If true, this may mean that the Soviets are trying to get some commitment from Arafat on Israel that would open the way to Palestinian representation at Geneva.

Arafat was greeted by Soviet party boss Brezhnev and other members of the Politburo after yesterday's May Day parade in Moscow, according to an Arab press account.

This the first report of contact between Brezhnev and Arafat. The Soviets, however, have not announced the meeting, and it may only have taken place in the course of routine May Day festivities. This would be consistent with past Soviet practice of stopping short of full, formal recognition of Arafat and the PLO.

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Soviet Treatment of Communist
Victory in South Vietnam

The Soviets continue to be relatively restrained in their treatment of the Communist victory in South Vietnam and appear to be looking for a lead from Hanoi before taking a clear-cut position on some of the crucial issues.

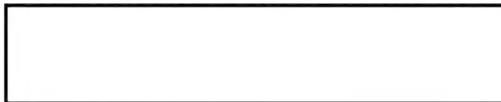
In a congratulatory message to North Vietnamese leader Le Duan on May 1, Party Chief Brezhnev referred to the installation in Saigon of an "administration," making no mention of the PRG in this context. This suggests that Moscow thinks that Hanoi would now just as soon de-emphasize the governmental aspects of the PRG. A congratulatory message from the Soviet leadership to the PRG leaders, also delivered on May 1, wishes them success in implementing their "national aspirations," but pledges Soviet support for the "South Vietnamese patriots" rather than the PRG per se.

The Brezhnev message to Le Duan includes a paragraph regarding the tasks and problems now facing Hanoi. This may be one way of suggesting that the North Vietnamese submerge whatever inclinations they might have to become more adventuresome elsewhere in the region. Cited among the "numerous difficulties" facing Hanoi were the "actions by external forces hostile to the Vietnamese people's national interests." In using the term "external forces," when he might have used "imperialist forces," Brezhnev clearly meant to put China on the list of those Hanoi has to worry about.

Concern that the Chinese may stand to benefit from the US withdrawal may be behind Moscow's decision to refrain from direct criticism of the US.

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A Soviet press official [redacted]

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[redacted] that the USSR sees some future role for the US in Indochina. The official said that the USSR would be prepared to help the US establish a relationship with North Vietnam. Apart from a desire to show Soviet reasonableness, Moscow may be trying to convey the idea that the US and the USSR have some shared interests in Indochina and Southeast Asia that could be explored further. [redacted]

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Romanian Foreign Minister
Ends Visit to Belgrade

On April 30, Romanian Foreign Minister Macovescu concluded three days of talks with top Yugoslav leaders, including Tito's chief lieutenant, Stane Dolanc, Vice President of the Federal Executive Council Petar Stambolic, and Premier Bijedic.

Macovescu briefed Belgrade on the results of Ceausescu's sudden visit to Syria and Egypt last week and on the Romanian leader's earlier trip to the Far East, Jordan, and Tunisia. The two sides also undoubtedly compared notes on Romania's efforts to gain observer status in the nonaligned movement. The communique summarizing the talks in Belgrade indicates that among other things, Macovescu and Yugoslav Foreign Minister Minic stressed the significance of the cooperation between the Yugoslav and Romanian Communist parties and the positive role to be played by the nonaligned states in establishing world peace.

The communique hails the victories of the Khmer Rouge and Viet Cong as valuable contributions to the struggles of all peoples against the "policy of force and interference in the internal affairs of other countries." Macovescu and Minic also indirectly criticized Bulgaria for its refusal to recognize the existence of the Macedonian peoples within its borders when they spoke of the positive role played by Yugoslav and Romanian national minorities in developing friendship between the two countries.

The Macovescu visit highlighted the increasingly frequent substantive exchanges between Belgrade and Bucharest. Since the first of the year, two other

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substantive exchanges occurred: Romanian Defense Minister Ionita was in Belgrade in February, and Ceausescu conferred with Dolanc in late January in Timisoara.

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Brezhnev Promoted to Four-Star General

Presenting greetings from the general secretary to a conference devoted to the 30th anniversary of victory in Europe, Defense Minister Grechko described Brezhnev inter alia as "general of the army." This is the first report that he holds such a military rank, and if true represents a two-step promotion for him. His last known rank was that of lieutenant general. A political officer in World War II, Brezhnev left the army as a major general. He received a second star when he returned to the military as supervisor of political work in the Soviet navy, a position he held from March 1953 to February 1954.

The date of his promotion--if he did indeed receive one--is not known. Possibly it came in connection with his recent activities promoting the vigilance and combat preparedness campaign, in which he sent letters to outstanding military units. Or it may have been awarded at the initiative of Grechko, who could hope to reap some advantage for his military empire by such apple-polishing. Brezhnev's fondness for the military is well known, he likes to adorn himself with his military decorations, such as his Hero of the Soviet Union award, and he has reputedly boasted that he keeps his military uniform in a prominent place in his apartment, and is ready to don it again if need be and join the ranks.

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Soviets Display New YAK-42 Trijet

The new Soviet-built YAK-42 passenger aircraft was put on display for the first time in Moscow in mid-April and may be shown at the Paris Air Show, which begins on May 30. The aircraft, which is designed to carry between 100 and 120 passengers, began test flights some six weeks ago. So far its performance has been satisfactory.

The YAK-42 is basically an oversized version of the highly successful 30-passenger YAK-40, which was introduced into scheduled Aeroflot service in the late 1960s. Over 500 YAK-40s are currently in operation, most of them serving on routes in rural European Russia and Siberia. The YAK-42--which resembles the British Aircraft Corporation's BAC one-eleven--with its increased passenger capacity and somewhat longer range will replace the YAK-40 on routes that show growing traffic demand. Aeroflot's projected traffic growth over the next five years will require at least 200 YAK-42s.

The aircraft may go into serial production by early 1976, if the testing program continues to be successful.

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